

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. Bleached polyacrylic acid crosslinked cellulosic fibers, comprising polyacrylic acid crosslinked cellulosic fibers treated with a bleaching agent.
2. The fibers of Claim 1 having a Whiteness Index greater than polyacrylic acid crosslinked cellulosic fibers that have not been treated with the bleaching agent.
3. The fibers of Claim 1, wherein the bleaching agent comprises hydrogen peroxide.
4. The fibers of Claim 1, wherein the bleaching agent comprises hydrogen peroxide in combination with sodium hydroxide.
5. A method for making bleached polyacrylic acid crosslinked fibers, comprising applying a bleaching agent to polyacrylic acid crosslinked fibers.
6. The method of Claim 5, wherein the bleaching agent comprises hydrogen peroxide.
7. The method of Claim 6, wherein hydrogen peroxide is applied to the fibers in an amount from about 0.1 to about 20 pounds per ton fiber.
8. The method of Claim 6, wherein the bleaching agent comprises hydrogen peroxide in combination with sodium hydroxide.
9. The method of Claim 8, wherein sodium hydroxide is applied to the fibers in an amount up to about 5 pounds per ton fiber.
10. An absorbent product, comprising bleached polyacrylic acid crosslinked cellulosic fibers, wherein the bleached polyacrylic acid crosslinked cellulosic fibers comprise polyacrylic acid crosslinked cellulosic fibers treated with a bleaching agent.
11. The product of Claim 10, wherein the product is a wipe, tissue, or towel.

12. The product of Claim 10, wherein the product is an infant diaper, adult incontinence product, or feminine hygiene product.